

Coins

Old nickels:

Some ring up valuable sales

By Roger Boye

HERE ARE answers to more questions about coins and currency.

Q—I rarely see anything in your articles about old nickels. Are they worth saving?—J.S., Hammond, Ind.

A—Almost all nickels made before 1940 that still have legible dates are collectors' items. However, many of them are worth just a little over face value, such as circulated specimens of Philadelphia-minted nickels from the 1930s.

Also, coin dealers charge at least 50 cents each for silver nickels made during World War II. Other more recent collectible dates include the 1949-S, 1950, 1951-S, and 1955. The lowest-mintage nickel made since 1940 is the 1950-D; it sells for about \$7.50 in fine condition.

Q—While going through my late father's possessions, I found two half-dimes. He had picked them up in 1886 at a railroad wreck in Shelburne Falls, Mass. What's the difference between a half-dime and a nickel? And are they of any value?—C.C., New Carlisle, Ind.

A—Basically, half-dimes were the silver predecessors of the nickel. They were minted from 1794 to 1873 with a face value of 5 cents; the nickel was born in 1866. All half-dimes are collectors' items today, with some of the rare dates worth several hundred dollars.

Q—I received a 1972-D Eisenhower dollar that was gold-plated. Are there any others like it in existence? Does it have any value to a coin collector?—D.S., Des Plaines.

A—Almost any Eisenhower dollar can be plated with the proper equipment and materials. Such coins are popular sales items in many novelty shops, but they have little collector value. The plating is usually done with a minute quantity of gold or another yellow-colored metal.

Q—I have some \$5 bills of series 1950-B, 1950-D, and others that do not have "In God We Trust" on the back side. Are they worth more than face value because of this?—E.M., Oak Lawn.

A—No \$5 bills of series 1950 through 1950-E carried the words "In God We Trust." The motto was added with the series 1963 bills. Generally, \$5 Federal Reserve notes of the various 1950 series do not have collector value except for bills in crisp, uncirculated condition.

Q—Where can I get some Susan B. Anthony dollars? The supermarkets in our neighborhood don't have any.—A.S., Chicago.

A—Banks throughout the Chicago area are distributing the coins to businesses and individuals. Eventually, you should begin to receive Anthony dollars in change at local stores.